

2011-2012 Weekly Field Reports

Copacabana, King George Island

Volume 15
January 23, 2012

Science Report:

1. **Penguins:** This week we continued to weigh Adélie penguin fledglings before they left to forage at sea. We also conducted our sixth and final Adélie penguin diet sample on Monday (1/23). The krill (*Euphausia superba*) continued to consist of unusually large proportions of juvenile krill: 63% of the krill measured in the samples were juveniles and two of the five samples were 100% juveniles. The adult krill sizes ranged from 36-49 mm and 69% were males.

We conducted our fourth and final gentoo penguin diet sample on Tuesday (1/24). Unlike the Adélie penguin diets, we saw fewer juvenile krill, with only 12% of the krill measured being juveniles. We only found one fish otolith in one sample. The adult krill sizes ranged from 36-57 mm and the ratio between males and females was nearly equal.

We did our first chinstrap penguin diet sample on Thursday (1/26). The proportion of juvenile krill in the samples was higher than normal, but less than in the Adélie penguin diets: 24% of the krill measured in the samples were juveniles. The adult krill sizes ranged from 36-52 mm and 65% were females.

50 geolocator (GLS) tags were attached to breeding chinstrap penguins on Thursday (1/26) in one of our study sites at Uchatka. And 8 more GLS tags were attached to breeding Adélie penguins in one of our study sites at Copa on Monday (1/23).

We deployed our first and only round of satellite transmitters (PTTs) on breeding chinstrap penguins at Uchatka on Thursday (1/26). We also retrieved four of the five units deployed on gentoo penguins last week.

2. **Skuas:** This week we have only 12 brown skua territories left with chicks and one with eggs. Five more geolocators (GLS) tags were attached to breeding brown skuas at Point Thomas on Saturday (1/28).
3. **Seals and Whales:** We counted 236 juvenile/unknown elephant seals, 18 fur seals, and one leopard seal on Thursday (1/26), during our regular Demay to Copa census. We also counted 54 juvenile/unknown elephant seals, ten fur seals, and two Weddell seals on our weekly Copa to Pt. Thomas census on Saturday (1/28).



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The first minke whale of the season was sighted entering the bay on Sunday (1/29). We also continued to see humpback whales throughout the week and on Thursday (1/26), two humpback whales were observed breaching off of Uchatka point.

Weekly Weather

This week we have had a surprising stretch of calm and somewhat sunny weather, with only a couple of days of 14-18 mph winds. Temperatures ranged from 34-39° F, with very little precipitation throughout the week.

The 2011-12 Copa Field Team
Penny Chilton, Field Team Leader
Wayne Trivelpiece, PI
Brette Soucie
Matt Henschen

